By Mark Krikorian

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**Would tighter security curb illegal immigration? Yes.**

 Border security is one piece of the very large controlling-immigration puzzle. But policing borders, including the use of physical barriers where necessary, has been integral to the preservation of national sovereignty for centuries. In our country, some two-thirds of the illegal population has snuck across the border with Mexico; the rest entered legally — as tourists, students, etc. — and never left. As part of the development of a modern, national immigration system, Congress in 1924 created the U.S. Border Patrol. As illegal immigration grew to massive proportions in the late 1970s, the Border Patrol's work became something of a charade, with a handful of officers returning whatever Mexican border-jumpers they could nab and then watching them immediately turn around and try again. The first step in closing that revolving door came in 1993 and 1994, when new strategies were implemented in San Diego and El Paso, where most illegal immigration occurred, to deter crossings altogether rather than simply chase after people through streets and alleys after they'd already crossed. Over the past decade-and-a-half, the enforcement infrastructure at the border has grown immensely, but it is still laughably inadequate. Although the number of agents at the Southern border has tripled, to some 12,000, that still represents an average of no more than two agents per mile per shift. Expanded fencing has also been part of this build-up. In the past, when the region on both sides of our Southern border was essentially empty, the limited fencing in place was intended simply to keep cattle from wandering off. Now, with huge metropolises on the Mexican side, serious fencing is being built — first in San Diego, where illegal crossings have plummeted as a result, and now along more than 800 additional miles of the border, though this is still a work in progress. In addition to these physical barriers, we have had for years additional security measures (deceptively labeled "virtual fencing"), such as motion sensors, stadium lighting and remote-controlled cameras. But while border enforcement is a necessary element of immigration control, it is not sufficient. There are three layers of immigration security — our visa-issuing consulates abroad, the border (including legal entry points) and the interior of the country. Improvements at the border are essential, and many are already under way. The weakest link today is the interior, where efforts to deny illegal immigrants jobs, driver's licenses, bank accounts, etc., are being fought at every turn by the business and ethnic lobbyists who benefit from open borders.